The major achievements in respect of mapping and assessment of polymetallic nodules from the allocated area are as follows:

India was awarded the status of Pioneer Investor and was allocated an Area of 1.50,000 square kilometer in Central Indian Ocean Basin (CIOB).

Detailed multibeam bathymetry mapping, survey and sampling area in CIOB has been carried out and resources potential estimated.

Based on survey, India retained 75,000 square kilometer of area and completed the entire obligation as a Pioneer Investor.

(c) During the year 2003-04, efforts will be continued to ascertain the results obtained earlier for preparation of maps.

Under polymetallic nodule programme, it is proposed to carry out close grid surveys of the retained Area to undertake detailed studies to update the database and the estimates of resources for identification of first generation mine site.

Contract to Private Firm for Maintenance of Railway Stations

5206. SHRIDATTA MEGHE:
PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a private firm would keep Old Delhi Railway Station and footover bridges clean as appeared in the media recently;

(b) if so, the complete details thereof;

(c) whether Government would consider awarding similar contracts for the maintenance and upkeep of prominent and crowded railway station in different parts of the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) to (d) Though contract for mechanized cleaning and upkeep of platforms and other passenger usage areas has been awarded in respect of Old Delhi Railway Station, the work has not yet started. The Zonal Railways have been empowered to undertake such activities at other important stations within their jurisdiction.

Renewal of Contract of M/s. A. H. Wheeler & CO.

5207. SHRI SUKHDEV SINGH LIBRA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to refer to reply to Starred Question 185 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 1 st December, 2000 and state: